(i) the seriousness of the Offence in terms of its nature as also quantum of involvement viz-a-viz the suspect;

(ii) past record and background of the accused:

(iii) apprehensions about his tampering with the material evidence or in influencing/ preventing the potential witnesses from rendering evidence by resorting to threats intimidation or inducement;

(iv) apprehensions about his fleeing justice and thereby thwarting the process of further investigation and trial;

(v) for ensuring his availability for the purposes of the trial.

The Directorate seeks remand or extension of remand, inrespect of the person arrested and produced before the competent Courts, only in those cases and only for such length of time as is absolutely essential and justified for the conduct of investigations. Infact, the Directorate, while seeking remand/ extenstion of remand, places all the relevant facts/material before the Court, and, the Hon'ble Court, after taking into consideration and appreciating all these facts and circumstances of each case, issues such Orders for remand or bail, as it considers appropriate. Hence, it cannot be said that the remand or extension thereof could be for any undue long period.

A review of FERA, 1973 was initiated in 1992 by setting up a Task Force. Further changes, if any, may also be considered in due Course.

(d) and (e) Section 58 of FERA, 1973 deals with vexatious search or arrest of persons by Enforcement Officer i.e. without having a responsible suspicion. Further under Seciton 52 of the Act a separate Appeliate Board has been constituted to hear appeals against the order of Adjudicating Officers.

FERA Violation Case against Dennet Coleman and Company

*371. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any case against Times of India Group and Bennet Coleman and Company regarding FERA violation is pending; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The investigations in this case were kept in abeyance since the matter was sub-judice in Calcutta High Court.

Criteria for Declaring Outbreak of an Epidemic

*372. SHRI MD. SALIM:
SHRI E. BALANANDAN:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the Criteria to declare outbreak of an epidemic';

(b) whether the current Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever (DHF), which claimed, hundreds of lives in Delhi and thousands of DHF patients reported in hospitals, was an epidemic;

(c) whether State Government of Delhi after its failure to fight the disease and mosquito menace had sought any help from the Centre; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) The unusual occurrence of a disease in a community or region, clearly in excess of the expected levels signifies the onset of an epidemic or outbreak. The trend noticed in the past signifies the "expected" frequency.

(b) Considering the large number of admissions/deaths reported on account of suspected Dengue/DHF in Delhi hospitals, the Government of NCT of Delhi was told to treat the situation as epidemic.

(c) and (d) On the request of the Govt. of Delhi, Malathion Technical, Pyrethrum Extract and Fogging machines have been made available by the Directorate of National Malaria Eradication Programme to undertake vector control measures. Centrifuge machines to augment blood component separation facilities were also arranged for hospitals in Delhi including Indian Red Cross Society.

Air Services Agreement

*373. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an Air Services Agreement between India and Hong Kong has been signed; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) and (b) The air services operations between India and Hong Kong were earlier regulated by the India-U.K. Air Services Agreement. A separate Air Services Agreement has now been signed between India and Hng Kong on 10th October, 1996. As per this Agreement, one or more airline(s) may be designated by each side for operation of air services between India and Hong Kong. At present the Hong Kong side is entitled to operate 4 services and the Indian side 5 services on the agreed routes.

Poor Industrial activity forcing Companies to Abandon Equity Issue Plans

*374. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that poor industrial activity in the country has forced about 265 companies to abandon their equity issue plans;

(b) if so, whether Government have gone into the causes of this unprecedented setback to the share market; and

(c) if so, the details of the same and steps taken to rectify the situation?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) According to Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), it had issued during the period January to June, 1996 acknowledgement cards/observations to 932 companies for making issues of securities in the stock market. Out of these, 141 companies did not make the proposed issue.

(b) and (c) The situation in the industrial sector and in the stock market is constantly reviewed by the Government and other agencies such as the Securities and Exchange Board of India. The stock market has remained relatively subdued during the recent months on account of a variety of factors such as expectations of investors, financial results of some companies and uncertainties. The main concern of Government's policy towards the stock market is the ensure that it operates in a fair and transparent manner and in full compliance with various relevant laws, rules and regulations. Government and SEBI are committed to introducing reforms in the stock market on a continuous basis for enhancing investor confidence in the market.

Fresh Survey to Install VLPT at Basot

*375. SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA: SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to undertake fresh survey to install VLPT at